

Enhancing Ecoliteracy through TFK in Proverbs and Its Application

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Introduction

The preservation and application of traditional knowledge, local knowledge, and indigenous knowledge to enhance sustainable forest management has become an integral part of conservation planning for forest ecosystems. In particular, proverbs are considered pithy axioms of traditional knowledge or local knowledge in relation to forest and natural resources management in that they effectively convey the six aspects of traditional knowledge that are regarded as the basis of ecoliteracy, as given by Houde (2007): 1) factual observation; 2) management system; 3) past and current uses of the environment; 4) ethics and values; 5) vector for cultural identity; and 6) cosmology. Based on previous research by Kim et al. (2017) and further literature review on the use of traditional knowledge for forest management, this paper aims to 1) examine critical research questions and research approaches suggested by previous research on the use of TK or LK for forest management; 2) summarize the opportunities and challenges of using proverbs in the context of forest and natural resources management; and 3) suggest a research framework for further studies.

Materials and Methods

I used ISI Web of Science and Google Scholar to conduct the literature search. The keywords included *traditional ecological knowledge*, *traditional knowledge*, *local knowledge*, *indigenous knowledge*, *forest management*, and *natural resources management*. In addition, the second and third part of this paper largely relied on the findings and approaches suggested by Kim et al. (2017), and I further developed the approaches so as to develop a more generalized research framework for relevant studies.

Findings and Discussion

Among 90 papers found through the literature search, 30 relevant studies were shortlisted for analysis of critical research questions in relation to the use of TK or LK for forest management. The findings of the literature review reveal that most studies on the use of TK or LK for forest management pay attention to the first, second, fourth, and sixth aspects (factual observation, management system, ethics and values, and cosmology, respectively) of the knowledge system in developing research questions and framework. In other words, TK or LK is thought to be effective for identifying the “context” of a given community and/or local social-ecological characteristics. In terms of research methodological approaches, many studies chose both qualitative and quantitative methods so as

to increase study credibility. The findings and approaches used by Kim et al. (2017) on their studies on the use of proverbs to enhance ecoliteracy also show similar implications in that it employed an exploratory sequential methodological framework that combined both qualitative and quantitative methods. Such a framework also enables researches to effectively examine the relevance of proverbs in finding implications for forest management and conservation. In this regard, I summarized and developed a research framework that adopts an exploratory sequential methodological approach, and selected key research questions/guidelines with regard to the examination of proverbs in the context of forest management research, which will be presented during the 10th International Conference on Traditional Forest Knowledge and Culture in Asia.

Houde, N. 2007. The six faces of traditional ecological knowledge: challenges and opportunities for Canadian co-management arrangements. *Ecology and Society* **12**:34.

Kim, G., R. Vaswani, W. Kang, M. Nam, and D. Lee. 2017. Enhancing Ecoliteracy through Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Proverbs. *Sustainability* **9**:1182.